

is when the White House, the House and the Senate was controlled by the Democrats. I heard the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) stand up here and plead for a middle-class tax cut in that 1993 bill. It was the largest tax on the middle class we have ever had in U.S. history. There was a \$360 billion deficit, forever, no light at the end of the tunnel. No, we were not going to vote for that.

There was a \$320 billion increase. Did they increase the spending on veterans? No. Did they increase it on the military or Social Security or the Social Security Trust Fund? No. They did it at that time on the then First Lady HILLARY CLINTON's health care government control plan and welfare.

Well, what did they do? They cut the veterans' COLA in the 1993 bill. Things they demagogue every single day, they cut the entire COLA for veterans. They cut the entire COLA for military. When Republicans took the majority, we passed and rescinded that and we restored those COLAs for our veterans and our military.

They demagogue every day about Social Security and our seniors. They increased the tax on Social Security. They cut every dime out of the Social Security Trust Fund for their tax increase, and that is wrong as well.

Did they cut spending? No, they did not. They even had an increase in the gas tax that went into the general fund. When we took the majority in 1994 we changed that also. We did not eliminate it, what we did was put it into the transportation fund so that liberals could not spend it on social programs.

In 2000, as I said, there was a recession. Under Bill Clinton we had 147 military deployments, in Haiti, Somalia, Iraq five times, Sudan, Bosnia, Kosovo. In Bosnia and Kosovo, we flew 86 percent of the missions, we paid for 90 percent. The U.S., not "Butros-Butros By-Golly" in the UN, but we paid for 90 percent of those wars.

Then the next fallacy is the Clinton surplus. Not a single Clinton budget after the 1993 bill passed this floor. Republicans even brought two of his budgets to the floor to have Democrats vote on them. They were so ridiculous, they got the same amount of votes as the Hillary Clinton health care plan, three votes. Why? Because it was so outrageous and demagogued. But yet they would not vote for it. Not one substitute, even the Blue Dog budget, ever passed this floor.

So we restored the veterans and military COLAs, we took transportation dollars and put them into the Transportation Trust Fund, we balanced the budget, and yet they claim that it was a Clinton Democrat surplus.

It just is not true.

DEALING WITH THE ISSUES IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. ROHR-ABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, let me note that one of the prior speakers from the other side of the aisle was talking about the tax cut going to the richest part of America, which they defined as any family earning over \$75,000 a year.

Now, I would hope that every working family out there, where a man and woman working as hard as they do in order to make ends meet, realizes that if their total family income is over \$75,000, the people on this side of the aisle have been labeling them as the rich, as the wealthy, as the people who need to be exploited in order to help all the other people.

This is quite disturbing. It is certainly disturbing to me. I do not come from a wealthy family and the people I know work really hard in order to have a family income of \$75,000 a year. Let me note that in our package, we are hearing a complaint that we are helping families that earn \$75,000 a year, we are hearing complaints we have included a child tax credit, we are hearing a complaint we have ended the marriage penalty tax, that we have tried to give the seniors a little relief on their earnings limitations, things that were dramatically reversed in the opposite direction during the Clinton years when the Democrats controlled both Houses of Congress and the presidency.

They just went to work on all of the ordinary Americans. Of course, ordinary Americans are anyone who earns under \$75,000. But if you earned \$75,000 a year, you are the enemy and you are the target, according to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

But that is not the subject I wish to talk about today. Just very quickly, let me note I have spent a great deal of time in Afghanistan over the years. People in this body understand that I have taken special care with the issue of Afghanistan. I warned this body for years during the Clinton administration that we had to do something about the Taliban or it would come back to hurt us, and it did, in a big way on September 11, when 3,000 of our own people were slaughtered by an attack that had been based in Afghanistan.

I rise today to warn my colleagues that the situation in Afghanistan is not going in the right way. Although much progress has been made, there are some things we need to worry about. Let us remember that the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, some of the same people, these mujahedin fighters who fought against the Soviet Union, and I was there in Afghanistan at the time with them, those very same people were recruited by this administration, by the United States, to help us defeat the Taliban and drive al Qaeda, which was a terrorist gang headed by bin Laden, out of Afghanistan.

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Their bravery, along with that of our Special Forces teams, had a magnifi-

cent victory in Afghanistan. We drove them out; but since that time, we have not done what is right by the Afghan people again. When they helped us drive out the Soviet Union troops and end the Cold War, we let them sleep in the rubble. There has not been the progress in helping them rebuild their country in Afghanistan that they need to experience. America needs to pay attention to this. There are prices to pay when we do not do what is right.

The heroin crop in Afghanistan has quadrupled over the last year and a half. That is because the people are desperate. They have no other source of income. We have to go in there and help those people rebuild their country, and we are not doing so.

What is worse than that is our embassy, under the control of the United States State Department, is pushing to undermine the Northern Alliance that drove out the Taliban and defeated al Qaeda, they are undermining these brave militia men and instead, shifting power over to another group in Afghanistan, many of whom were allied with the Taliban. Now, if you think that is screwed up, it is hard to fathom when you take a look at it.

What the people in the northern part of Afghanistan are looking for is the right to elect their own provincial leaders, their governors, and their own mayors and city councilmen; they are asking for that right before they would disarm. Our embassy is pushing a centralized system on the people of Afghanistan modeled after the French, of all people, where the government, the central government would appoint the heads of the local police and the schools and whatever. Well, no wonder the Northern Alliance who fought the Taliban are not willing to give up their arms until they know they have a right to cast ballots to determine their own destiny.

Our State Department, for some reason, does not have faith in the American system of government to the point that we are willing to share that with the people of Afghanistan. We need to keep track of what is going on over there. The people in Congress, the administration needs to keep closer track of what is happening and make sure that democracy works and the people of Afghanistan can share in the prosperity of this era.

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Ohio.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

CALLING ON AMERICANS TO ENSURE THEY ARE HEARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am moved to wish all of the mothers of America a happy Mother's Day. Just a few hours ago, I stood with mothers from this community acknowledging the very special challenges that mothers have, particularly unemployed mothers in supporting their families, nurturing sons and daughters who cannot find employment. I encourage them to have their voices heard. In fact, I challenged the mothers of America, particularly the large numbers of mothers who face economic troubles and challenges every day, to have a mothers' march so that their voices can be heard; a mothers' march that will march on Washington to ask the hard questions about health care, education, Medicare and Medicaid, the kinds of issues that my friends on the other side of the aisle make light of, throw it to the wind, call it the poor people's issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take issue with some of the good words of my friends from the other side of the aisle. I will show my colleagues the headline in USA Today that says, "Support for the Bush tax cut is growing." I have an answer to that, Mr. Speaker. Every Sunday morning, before millions of Americans go off to church, the owned and paid-for national television programs time after time show the same droning voice, one side of the issue, how great a \$550 billion tax cut is. If our airwaves, that are supposed to be protected by the first amendment, do not allow the opposition perspective to even be heard, then what would we expect from the American people? What would we expect but for the polling to go from 42 percent to 52 percent. Shame on America's media. They only showed one side of the war, and now they are only going to show one side of the domestic tax debate.

Our good friends in this House followed suit. Never in the history of this body, the body that is supposed to be responsible for the purse strings of America, and debated on the floor of the House a lousy 1 hour when, in the times of the Democratic control, hours of debate, days of debate were given to the opposition to express their viewpoint. But yet we were denied both a motion to recommit and a substitute. What do you expect from the American people?

But let me tell the American people, those of them who claim to be interested in this government: you can lay back and let the polls speak for you if you desire to do so. You can say Democrats cannot be heard. But you look at this picture in The Washington Post and see the throngs of Iraqis, the bills that are going to be mounting; and yet my colleagues are arguing for a \$550 billion tax cut that is going to do nothing for the people of this Nation.

In fact, just my district, as an example, those individuals, the average tax cut for the top 2 percent of taxpayers in the 18th congressional district, a somewhat similar district to American districts around the country, those making the top 2 percent, they will get \$13,000. But the average tax cut for the lower 56 percent of the taxpayers in the 18th congressional district will be a lousy \$136.

The Democratic job plan sings a different tune, but we cannot get the airing or the hearing before the American public. We believe in tax cuts for working families, increasing the child tax credit, expansion of the 10 percent bracket, eliminating the marriage penalty. We believe in allowing small businesses to expense up to \$75,000, bonused appreciation. We understand that small businesses are the backbone of America. And for those of you looking for jobs and are frustrated, deflated, and frightened, we understand the compassion that is needed for you to be able to support your families; but our Republican friends did not extend your unemployment benefits.

We know the crises that are going on in families today, the very tough decisions that have to be made about food or pay the rent, but our Republican friends are not interested. We give broader coverage for those who are unemployed. We give money back to the States. How many of you come from States where they are grappling with a budget deficit and they cannot afford to pay teachers or child care providers? We understand that in providing health care, education, and homeland security and infrastructure.

Might I suggest to my colleagues that it is a mockery to think that this \$550 billion joke is going to create jobs. The President's plan is \$550 billion. He alleges that it will create 1 million jobs. That means we are paying \$550,000 per job. Two jobs, two jobs, it takes.

So all I can say to the American public and to my colleagues in this House, when the Republicans are in charge, this chart shows us that we lose jobs. When the Democrats were in charge, including President Clinton, we voted in 1993 to surge the economy and in 1997 to surge the economy, and we did that. And the 1990s were one of the most prosperous decades in the history of this Nation. It is a shame on America, a shame on the media for you to allow yourselves to be so duped. I hope you understand. If you do not stand up and speak for yourself, you will be run over.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentlewoman from California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

REPUBLICAN TAX CUTS MEAN RECKLESS FISCAL COURSE FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, in less than 1 hour's time, this House of Representatives set our Nation on a very reckless economic course. We are here today in a time of great national challenge. Overseas we face the large challenge of rebuilding Iraq and trying to establish a democratic form of government in that country of about 23 million people. The President recently asked for, and the Congress appropriated, about \$80 billion for our efforts in Iraq.

But while we are engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere, we must not forget the very real needs right at home. Because while we build new schools and new hospitals in Iraq and we work to get the Iraqi economy moving again, this administration has been very much out of touch with our needs right here at home and with getting our economy moving again right here in America.

Since the Bush administration came to office, we have lost 2.7 million jobs in this country. Gone, vanished. Half a million of those jobs were lost in the last 3 months alone. And today, 8.8 million Americans are unemployed.

We need an economic plan that will put America back to work and a plan that will reflect the values and the priorities of the American people. The Republican tax package that was adopted earlier today does not. It will not stimulate the economy, it will only stimulate red ink in the years to come, and it does not reflect the priorities of the American family; it reflects the priorities of a very few at the expense of our national interests.

In fact, the message of the Republican tax cut today was loud and clear: forget about the people who are out of work. Forget about the long-term fiscal health of our country. Their number one domestic priority, number one, the most pressing need in America today, according to the package and message they sent, is that the very wealthiest in our country, the people at the very top of the ladder are being taxed too much and we need to give